

# Teaching and Learning Medical English Using Corpus Resources

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## **Abstract**

Corpus linguistics has much to offer the field of professional communication as it allows the study of specialized discourse in considerable detail yielding important information about language, its structure and use.

We briefly present a didactic proposal developed within the Faculty of English Studies of the University of Milan aiming at teaching --and learning- medical terminology through the creation of a specialized monolingual glossary. The compilation of a corpus of medical text samples extensively representative of mainstream medicine and its subsequent processing with a corpus query system allowed us to sort the most frequent terms. Word sketches, concordancers and thesaurus queries helped us add information about the usage, behaviour and similar meanings of the selected words. Finally, the results were collated and systematized in a medical glossary.

By identifying subject-specific terms with their typical collocational and grammatical patterns, a corpus-based approach does not only speed the glossary production process but it will also prepare medical students and practitioners to be better equipped to use these terms in context.

**Key words:** English for Medical Purposes, medical terminology, medical glossary, corpus based approach, corpus query system